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# Special issue celebrating significant birthdays of John Cannon and Derek Holt

This issue of the *Journal of Algebra* is dedicated to Professors John Cannon and Derek Holt in recognition of their distinguished contributions to mathematics.

John was a pioneer in the development of computational algebra. His early system CAYLEY was the first comprehensive high-level package for groups and representations. He is the principal architect of MAGMA, a leading computational algebra system and a powerful research tool for algebra, number theory, geometry and combinatorics. He has made important algorithmic contributions in group theory and beyond, particularly the study of finitely-presented and permutation groups.

Derek is a prolific researcher on many aspects of group theory and computation. He has made significant contributions on: the cohomology of groups; permutation and matrix groups; perfect groups; formal language theory and automatic groups. He is the principal author of a major reference work on computational group theory, and a co-author of the seminal work on automatic groups. He has also developed widely-used software for finitely-presented and automatic groups.

Derek and John have collaborated extensively on developing algorithms for finite groups: these include the construction of maximal subgroups, automorphism groups, and deciding isomorphism.

The contributions to this issue reflect well the range and diversity of their interests, and their influences on the wider mathematical community.

We thank Professor Gerhard Hiss for his invitation to edit this Special Issue and the San Diego staff of Elsevier for their technical assistance.

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